

long journey from Iowa to Washington to speak with Iowa's congressional delegation about keeping their promises to Dubuque's families. These residents' dedication and commitment illustrates why their community has been recognized with this honor.

In the annual 100 Best Communities for Young People competition, America's Promise honors outstanding efforts on behalf of young people by their communities. The people of Dubuque, Iowa, have demonstrated their commitment to families and children through their involvement of the Dubuque Mentoring Partnership. Thanks to the important work of the DMP, the number of mentors in Dubuque has more than tripled and the number of children waiting for a mentor has been cut in half since 2005.

As a longtime mentor with Big Brothers/Big Sisters in my hometown of Waterloo, I learned the importance of mentoring to give children the greatest opportunity to achieve their potential.

The people of Dubuque should be proud of their accomplishment. I am proud to represent them in Congress.

#### LET'S SAVE MONEY, NOT WASTE IT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise in disbelief concerning the recent discussion about an airplane for the Speaker. Time and again Members of this body, and more importantly the American people, have been promised that this would be the most ethical and fiscally responsible Congress ever. Many things have clearly derailed that pledge, including a continuing resolution spending billions of dollars without any scrutiny.

What we are seeing here is a mentality of waste. I take the Speaker's word that she did not request the luxurious plane to transport her. However, it is troubling to me that the mentality of others is such that they would recommend more than what is needed.

We are the people's House, and the people expect us to spend their money wisely. We are here to serve, not live like kings and queens. This is an opportunity for us to review procedures and seek ways to save money, not waste it.

□ 1015

#### BUSH BUDGET SHORTCHANGES HOMELAND SECURITY PROGRAMS—PARTICULARLY FIRST RESPONDERS

(Mr. WILSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, President Bush sent Congress a budget for 2008 for the fiscal year that continues the misguided priorities of this administration. Last November,

the American people rejected the status quo, saying that we can do better. It is time for a change, it is a time for a change in direction.

Unfortunately, the President's budget is more of the same. His budget for the Department of Homeland Security is only 1 percent more than it was in 2007. This is a modest increase for a department that is charged with such a critical mission and has yet to meet the goals of protecting our country.

Particularly disappointing is the President's request for programs to support first responders. The President has reduced the preparedness and training by 33 percent. The firefighters' grants would be reduced by 55 percent. State and local law enforcement grants would also undergo cuts, depriving our communities of critical support when they need it most after 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are serious about ensuring that our local police departments and our firefighters have the equipment they need to better protect our communities. The President's budget must be rejected.

#### RETURN TO FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

(Mr. HENSARLING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, recently Speaker NANCY PELOSI said it is time for Congress to return to fiscal responsibility. It is often said that the best way to lead is by example. But I don't know if spending \$300,000 of the taxpayer money to fly the Speaker in a personal luxury jet to travel back and forth to San Francisco sets much of an example, particularly when any American can find a \$300 ticket for the same route on expedia.com.

According to CNN, Speaker PELOSI has requested that the military give her a jet that would include 42 business class seats, a fully enclosed stateroom, an entertainment center, a private bed, state-of-the-art communications system and a crew of 16.

Now, I know there are legitimate security concerns, but somehow the previous Speaker managed to use a smaller jet that seated 12 and had none of these amenities.

Why did the Speaker request this jet? According to the Washington Times, the Democrat, quote, "is seeking regular military flights not only for herself and her staff, but also for relatives and other Members of Congress."

If this is the Democrats' idea of fiscal responsibility, working families had better hold on to their wallets.

#### STOP TROOP ESCALATION

(Mr. WELCH of Vermont asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, it is becoming ever more clear that the troop escalation plan proposed by

the administration is not—is not—in our Nation's best interest or in the best interest of bringing stability to Iraq.

Last week, three different events demonstrated why it is absolutely essential that Congress accept its responsibility to debate the President's plan. First, the cost of the escalation: The President has advertised it to be \$5.6 billion; CBO, nonpartisan, estimates it will be \$21 billion.

Second, the number of troops required, the President is selling it, advertising it as requiring 21,600 troops. CBO estimates suggest that it will be at least 48,000 troops.

Next, Pentagon officials admitted last week that they do not have enough armored vehicles, armored kits and other equipment that is absolutely essential to protecting the well-being of our troops. We cannot be sending troops into battle without the equipment and the protection that they need.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ARMY SERGEANT JOHN COOPER OF FLEMINGSBURG, KENTUCKY

(Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of a brave young man from my district who recently lost his life fighting in Iraq. A resident of Ewing, Kentucky, Sergeant John Cooper lost his life in a roadside bomb attack just outside of Mosul. Sergeant Cooper was serving in Iraq with the Army's 2nd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, and was working on security operations in the area.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with John Cooper's mother, friends and family. They relayed to me stories of a brave young man who answered the call to duty by joining the Army in 1995 after graduating from Fleming County High School. He served in Iraq from February of 2003 to February of 2004 before being stationed in Korea.

In October 2006, he returned on a second tour. His mother, Janice Botkin, told me that her son was living out his life-long dream of serving in the military. She spoke to me of her son's bravery, his dedication and absolute belief in his mission, and by all accounts, Sergeant Cooper was a well-respected member and leader of his unit and his community.

Today, as we celebrate the life and memory of this great soldier, my thoughts and prayers are with Sergeant John Cooper's family and friends. The entire Nation is deeply indebted to Sergeant Cooper. We thank him for his service, and we honor him for his ultimate sacrifice.

#### ENCOURAGE MARKET DEVELOPMENT FOR BIOFUELS

(Mr. SESSIONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)